

UKTEPoP 2nd Annual Meeting: 4th October 2018, Birmingham

Joint Nature Conservation Committee hosted the second annual 'UK Terrestrial Evidence Partnerships of Partnerships' meeting on 4th October 2018 in Birmingham. The meeting was attended by representatives from JNCC's partnership terrestrial biodiversity surveillance schemes, as well as a wide range of policy representation. The meeting was also attended by CEH and BTO representatives from the JNCC-initiated cross-scheme 'Terrestrial Surveillance Development and Analysis' (TSDA) project, who worked with JNCC in the meeting's development and delivery.

The annual meeting aims to provide a platform for partners to exchange ideas and discuss common issues and influence and benefit from the TSDA project. The meeting consisted of a mix of plenary talks, open discussion, break out workshops, and of course lots of opportunity for informal networking. Chris Cheffings (JNCC) kicked-off the day by reflecting on what participants said they wanted at last year's UKTEPoP meeting and noting how this was reflected in the themes chosen for the day as well as some of the work completed so far by the TSDA project.

Key theme: Making scheme outputs as useful as possible

James Williams (JNCC) presented examples of how scheme outputs are providing impact through production of indicators, noting the benefits and challenges of working within the Official Statistics framework and how this might change in the future. Tom August (CEH) followed with insights from his 'hands-on' experience of combining and analysing data from across schemes. Afterwards, discussions highlighted a degree of surprise at how inconsistent data formats are between schemes, and a desire to harmonise to further analyses in the future. The TSDA contract will produce recommendations on how this could be achieved. Finally under this theme, Gavin Siriwardena (BTO) presented a range of platforms for communicating results, for example the Bird Trends website, and the integrated online system BTO developed for the Norfolk Bat Survey.

Key theme: Engaging with volunteers

Across schemes, there is a challenge to increase survey coverage in sparsely recorded areas. Dawn Balmer (BTO) presented on the 'Upland Rovers' approach which has been used to encourage volunteers to carry out a Breeding Bird Survey in an under recorded area whilst on holiday in the area, with just one sample visit being acceptable instead of the usual two. Oli Pescott (CEH, on behalf of Felicity Harris, Plantlife) then presented on the National Plant Monitoring Scheme's trialled approach to join up with local partners in remote areas (e.g. National Park Authorities, National Trust), promoting the scheme to achieve the partner's organisation goals. Following these presentations, Anna Robinson (JNCC) gave an overview of the importance of volunteers to our surveillance schemes and how participation has been changing (generally participation trends are positive, though there is some variation by scheme), before introducing the volunteer workshop to give the opportunity to reflect on information shared and discuss further.

Key theme: 'Looking forwards to new opportunities and country requirements'

The final theme of the day was broken down into two parts with a forward-looking nature. Firstly Gwawr Jones (JNCC) gave an interesting talk on what we can gain from developments in Earth Observation and how it can help showcase the power of our schemes, before the leading us into a workshop to consider the potential linkages in more detail. Secondly, the focus moved to arising county policy requirements. Michael Pocock (CEH) presented the [TSDA review of biodiversity evidence needs](#), before Andy Nisbet (NE) presented policy drivers across country agency work. Michael then shared some analysis of existing survey coverage and asked the meeting to consider specific policy questions that need answering in the third break out workshop.

Workshops were held on three topics (see individual write-ups for details.)

1. Use of volunteers

Discussions covered motivations and barriers, and how we can better recruit and maintain volunteer participation.

2. Linking EO to schemes

Groups considered how Earth Observation derived maps could benefit recording and surveillance schemes, as well as how habitat data collected as part of these schemes could feed into ground truthing to develop maps of habitat extent and potentially condition.

3. Solutions to policy gaps

In this workshop participants were asked for examples of specific questions that could be answered using biodiversity data. Participants were challenged to think of potential solutions. This was in the context of existing species and habitat sampling coverage.